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SEVENTY SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

of the

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

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For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1962

June 30, 1962

Honorable Board of Fire Commissioners
City of Los Angeles

Gentlemen:

This is the Seventy-sixth Annual Report of the Los Angeles City Fire Department.

The report highlights the improvements, changes, and accomplishments within the Department during the fiscal year 1961-62. It reflects the expansion of the many facets of fire department activity which must grow in order to remain abreast of a city which continues to expand explosively in population and "burnable values."

November of 1961 brought with it the most disastrous fire in the history of Los Angeles: the Bel Air conflagration. The loss of several hundred structures in a sweeping "brush fire" blaze, which defied control for two days, triggered action toward legislation which would regulate building materials and brush conditions in the mountain areas.

The completion and activation of six new fire stations during the year, and the acquisition and commissioning of a new fire boat epitomized the forward motion of the department in fulfilling present fire protection needs and anticipating future ones.

The accomplishments of the Fire Department could not have been brought about without the fullest interest and energies of the Mayor, the City Council, the Fire Commission and all of the officers and men of the Department. For their cooperation I am most grateful.

Respectfully,

W. L. Miller

WILLIAM L. MILLER
Chief Engineer

Chief Engineer William L. Miller is the General Manager of the Fire Department and, as such, administers its affairs in accordance with the Charter and Ordinances of the City of Los Angeles and the Rules and Regulations set forth by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Deputy Chief Don T. Hibbard is in charge of the Department's Staff Administration and commands the Department in the absence of the Chief Engineer.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES SECTION

Adjutant

The Administrative Deputy is assisted by an Adjutant who is responsible for conducting studies and forwarding recommendations for action necessitated by the National Board of Fire Underwriters' grading of the City of Los Angeles. He is also responsible, under the direction of the Administrative Deputy, for coordinating programs and activities on new concepts and ideas recommended for the improvement of the Department.

Administrative Planning

The Administrative Planning Unit is essentially responsible for the development and reporting of potential improvements in fire administration, management, and procedures based on studies of current trends and methods.

Its primary responsibility concerns budget analysis which involves research necessary to develop current and long-range budgetary estimates for the Department. Planning also compiles, analyzes, interprets, and disseminates information on fire statistics for the various subdivisions of the Department. It is responsible for data processing, written orders, policies, Manual of Operation revisions, the Employee's Suggestion Program, and forms control design and coordination. It also has the responsibility of coordinating the Duplicating Unit for the entire Department, which during the last calendar year handled more than 1,090,766 reproduced items.

Accounting Office

Under the direction of the Chief Accounting Employee, this office is responsible for all receipts and expenditures of public funds used by the Fire Department.

During the Fiscal Year 1961-62 the number of documents handled by this office totaled approximately 350,000, an increase of 10,000 over the previous year. The increased utilization of modern data processing equipment enabled the staff of highly specialized employees to cope with the ever increasing work load without additional personnel.

Some major activities affecting the Accounting Office during the year were:

1. Continued cooperation with the Administrative Office for the use of data processing equipment for recording and controlling inventories of supplies, equipment, accessories to equipment, hydrants, land and buildings; and

2. The major disaster, the Bel-Air Fire.

Public Education Unit

This unit conducts the Fire Department's public education program through the media of newspapers, radio, television and numerous periodicals.

Statistics illustrate its stature as a public education agency. During the year 17,724 column inches of educational news print appeared in local newspapers. In the radio and television fields, 99 radio spot announcements were used approximately 35,347 times.

Junior Fire Department and
Audio Visual Unit

During the 1961-62 fiscal year the fire safety message was delivered to 250,000 people through personal instruction, lectures and table top demonstrations by the personnel of these two units. Thousands more saw Fire Department displays at 10 public shows.

Students who were suspended from school for fire ordinance violations, with their parents, were given fire safety lectures as a requisite for readmittance to school. This program has resulted in fewer violations in proportion to the number of students.

Photography Unit

This unit is responsible for documentary photographs for the purpose of arson and fire investigation, training and public education. The Cinematography personnel of this unit prepared training films for the Department and TV shorts on fire prevention messages which were televised more than 500 times during the year.

BUREAU OF FIRE SUPPRESSION AND RESCUE

The two Bureaus of Fire Suppression and Rescue, each commanded by a Deputy Chief, function identically. These Bureaus are designated "Area I" and "Area II". Area I emcompasses the southern half and Area II the northern half of the City of Los Angeles.

During Fiscal 1961-62, the Bureaus of Fire Suppression and Rescue responded to 44,674 emergency alarms, 15,125 of which were fires, and 15,779 of which were for rescue calls. Rescue calls increased 1,703 over 1960-61 fiscal and now constitute more than one-third the total alarms answered by the Fire Department.

Over 323,000 fire prevention and pre-fire planning inspections were completed. A maximum effort was made in the field of pre-fire planning for hazardous and large area occupancies and those presenting life loss potential.

Inasmuch as over 90% of the Department budget is for salary, maximum return on this tremendous investment can be accomplished only through achievement of the highest practicable level of training. Toward this objective a Captain in each Division has been assigned full time as Division Training Officer. Training achievements expedited by these assignments have exceeded in quality and quantity those of each preceding year.

Our greatest training deficiency exists in the area of actual fire fighting. Provision of adequate fire ground training facilities is an absolute necessity if a satisfactory level of knowledge and skill is to be maintained. This deficiency has been recognized for more than twenty years.

In order to most effectively carry out our charter-imposed duties of extinguishing and preventing dangerous fires, the two major objectives of the Bureaus of Fire Suppression and Rescue are:

1. Maintenance of the highest practicable level of training for all personnel.

2. Expansion of public education in fire safety.

BUREAU OF PERSONNEL, TRAINING AND CIVIL DEFENSE

The Bureau of Personnel, Training and Civil Defense is under the command of a Deputy Chief and provides personnel services in guiding the careers of individual members of the Department; maintains personnel records; conducts recruit and in-service training; conducts the safety program; maintains a physical fitness and athletic program; conducts the medical program and operates the civil defense program.

Personnel counseling is available at all times to members and their families.

PERSONNEL SECTION ACTIVITIES

Personnel Records Unit

The Personnel Records Unit maintains a complete history of each employee from his appointment to retirement. This unit prepares all documents relating to appointments, step pay increases, promotions, transfers, leaves, credits, demerits, employment verifications, terminations and similar personnel transactions; counsels members on personal problems; recruits new firemen; issues badges, insignia and identification cards

Because of the continued growth of this Department, 203 new recruits were hired; 77 persons were processed to beginner and 95 members were promoted to Captain along with lesser numbers in other ranks.

Medical Liaison Unit

The health examination program through which each Chief officer and members 55 years of age and over [illegible], was continued. Other members are now being examined every 15 to 18 months. Each retiring member is given a complete physical examination including X-rays and cardiogram. This examination has in some cases indicated trouble sources resulting from service-connected injuries.

During the fiscal year the tetanus immunization program for all members was completed. This initial series was administered by the Health Department.

Studies are being conducted to provide for immunization against poison oak. Results are highly encouraging and should result in a program for members who become affected with poison oak in the near future.

[illegible]

[illegible] is conducted [illegible] by a Captain [illegible] of the Safety and Athletic Coordinator, who is responsible [illegible]

The Physical Fitness program, designed to promote general [illegible] especially aerobic, consists primarily of organized [illegible] activities in such sports as baseball, bowling, golf [illegible] softball). Other athletic activities are also encouraged. [illegible] sports programs also tend to teach the value of team work.

The Safety Program is based on the proven fact that most [illegible] can be prevented, since it must first be determined [illegible] why and when the accidents are occurring, much of the work [illegible] is spent in accident investigation and statistical [illegible] compilation and evaluation.

Numerous research and testing programs are being conducted for the purpose of securing new and better equipment and instituting new and safer procedures.

CIVIL DEFENSE ACTIVITIES

Meetings, conferences, and liaison accounted for much of the time spent on Civil Defense. Training and procurement of equipment to develop the Department's capability to handle radiological accidents was emphasized. Groundwork was completed to receive 73 radiological monitoring kits from Federal Civil Defense sources. They are expected to be delivered during [illegible]. Department-wide instructions were issued on procedures to effectively control damage and prevent injury in the event of incidents involving danger of radiation.

Preparations were made for further [illegible] volunteer training to be conducted during 1963 in order to develop instructors in this field. Use of quick coupling 6" [illegible] pipe for water transportation was [illegible] demonstrated for use. This pipe is available through the California Disaster [illegible] and 25,000 feet of it is stored at [illegible] within two hours travel time of Los Angeles.

TRAINING SECTION ACTIVITIES

The work performed by the Training Section is of a very diversified nature. A partial list of the duties is as follows:

4. [illegible] Department-wide training programs. This function is now performed by our Division Training Officers.

5. Officers now initiate and train the members as they are to work.

6. Train recruit firemen.

7. Respond to greater 4-alarm emergencies and analyze from a critical standpoint the fire fighting tactics used.

8. Coordinate training activities with outside institutions and departments.

9. Respond to all major emergencies to act as Personnel and Apparatus Control Officers.

10. Initiate and answer correspondence.

11. Receive and escort visitors.

12. Prepare manuals and training aids.

The following information, by units, summarizes the activities of the Section.

Manuals Prepared (0.501)

Ten training manuals were either prepared or revised. Fifty-seven bulletins and training aids were prepared and published. Behind this output are thousands of hours spent in research, preparation, editing, printing and distributing.

Apparatus Training (0.511)

Twenty-three pieces of apparatus were delivered to companies. This includes extensive instruction in the operation and maintenance of this new equipment to all platoons of the assigned companies. Twenty-two Log Books for both new and old apparatus were prepared.

Officer Training Unit

Ninety-four members attended a week-long Officers' Training School. Fifty-eight instructors were used in this program. Forty-one recruit Battalion Chiefs [illegible] course designed for this position. Ten members from other City departments attended one or more of our training courses.

BUREAU OF BUILDING ADMINISTRATION

The Bureau of Building Administration is commanded by a Deputy Chief and is composed of four sections: Buildings, Communications, Hydrants and Mains, and Maps and Drafting.

Buildings Section

The Buildings Section is responsible for providing adequate housing for the Department. Its primary function for both new construction and maintenance is that of a liaison office between our Department and other agencies.

The 1961-62 fiscal year was a vigorous year in our construction program. We completed six new fire stations, started seven new stations, and had four more new fire stations in the planning stage. To help round out the expenditures of the 1959 Fire Bond Funds, construction of the new Supply and Maintenance facility and the Coldwater Signal Office was started. The new Headquarters building and Fire Boat #4's new station are still in the planning stage.

Communications Section

Temporary plans were prepared for using Telephone Company facilities for dispatching from the Coldwater Signal Office until the Department program has been crystallized.

A portion of the Department dial telephone system was placed in operation. Plans for placing the balance of the system in service are complete. The dial system will be put in use as rapidly as the telephone company can provide facilities.

Alarm district assignment cards for eight (8) new fire stations were prepared and put in service.

The assignments were upgraded for approximately 200 locations.

Approximately 30,000 revisions to index running cards were made.

Hydrants and Mains

The Hydrant Office is primarily charged with processing, in cooperation with the Water Department Design Section, all subdivision of land maps, tracts and private street maps, for

adequate water supply and fire hydrants. During this fiscal year, approximately 41 conferences were held with various departments and organizations of industry to succeed in these projects. Approximately 800 fire hydrants were installed on public streets, private streets, and private property. Additionally, 297 hydrants were ordered enlarged to meet increased water requirements for zone and land use changes.

Many conferences were held with architectural and engineering firms on hydrant requirements for super market shopping areas and multi-apartment dwelling areas. Results of our recommendations at these conferences will be felt in the future.

Conferences were also held in cooperation with Fire Prevention Bureau, with engineers and architects of City and State Boards of Education; Flood Control, and Storm Drain projects, Freeways, and State Highway projects were field checked with design engineers of the Water Department for relocation of hydrants along 6 freeway routes. Projects of Department of Public Works were checked for possible hydrant installation on street projects. Maps were studied and areas field checked for hydrant top changes and new installations involving the installation of new mains, replacement and enlargement of existing mains.

At fiscal year's end, 473 new installations of hydrants had brought the total to 39,617 on Department of Water and Power mains.

In connection with the forthcoming NBFU's survey, 32 top changes were ordered in the Principal Business District.

Maps and Drafting

The function of this office is the drawing and maintenance of maps used by the Department. This entails the revision of existing maps in keeping with the growth of the City. During fiscal 1961-62, 11625 changes were made to existing maps which included new subdivisions, annexations and detachments, new and relocated hydrants, etc. Freeway construction required the plotting of 23.8 miles of right of way, which included numerous street closings and hydrant relocations. 4278 new maps were issued during the year. 1133 manhours were spent in other projects of special charts, graphs, certificates and testimonials.